Dear Bob,

QUARTERLY SAFETY IN CUSTODY STATISTICS: 26 JULY 2018

This is to draw your attention to information included in our national statistics publication which describes under-reporting found in prison safety data.

As part of our efforts to ensure we have robust data quality audit results for 2017/18 show that for assaults, around 10% of incidents sampled were unreported. This means that the true number of assault incidents is higher than the figure currently published as National Statistics. For self-harm, around 11% of sampled incidents were unreported in 2017/18. This means that the true number of self-harm incidents is higher than the figure currently published as National Statistics. While the estimated underreporting impacts on the reported levels, it does not impact on the broad trends and narrative. We are reporting our findings at the earliest opportunity in our long standing national statistics publication for transparency.

We continue to strive to further improve recording practices and are already supporting Governors with a package of measures. These include providing training sessions for prison staff on using the latest recording technology, initially targeting establishments where audit results flagged issues, and supporting governors to ensure the correct systems are in place. In the coming months we will monitor the performance of prisons to ensure improvements are made and sustained.

RORY STEWART MP